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May 5, 1999

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Dockets Management Branch (HFA-305)
Food and Drug Administration
5630 Fishers Lane, Room 1061
Rockville, MD 20852

Re: Docket #98N-1038, "Irradiation in the
production, processing, and handling of food"

To Whom it may Concern:

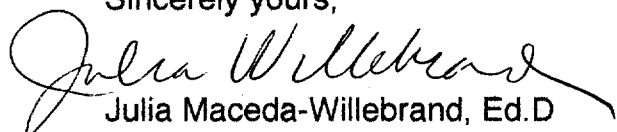
As a health conscious citizen I object to the new USDA proposals to eliminate labelling of irradiated food. The Department of Agriculture should be protecting the American public from the yet, unknown consequences of irradiation. And, in a democracy choice is a basic right. Your proposals threaten my health and remove my right to choose the food I buy. Food treated with radiation should be indefinitely labeled with the radura (the international symbol for irradiated food) and a statement indicating it was treated with radiation. The absence of such a statement would be misleading because irradiation destroys vitamins and causes changes in sensory and spoilage qualities that are not obvious or expected by the consumer.

Your proposal to remove the requirement of labelling which allows citizens to identify food which has been subjected to irradiation is outrageous. As a consumer I am entitled to this information. The USDA should be protecting all the citizens and not the agribusiness interests which benefit from such labeling prohibitions.

I urge the Department of Agriculture to scrap the proposed rules and to extend the comment period. Citizens should have time to learn of this new rule and to comment on it.

I await your reply.

Sincerely yours,


Julia Maceda-Willebrand, Ed.D

cc: Congressman Jerrold Nadler

98N-1038

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